

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE B3NEW YORK TIMES
5 March 1986

Top C.I.A. Aide Quits; New Official Is Named

Special to The New York Times

A WASHINGTON, March 4 — President Reagan today accepted the resignation of John N. McMahon, the second-ranking official at the Central Intelligence Agency, and replaced him with Robert M. Gates, the agency's Deputy Director for Intelligence.

The White House said in a statement that Mr. McMahon, a 34-year veteran of the agency, was leaving effective March 29 for personal reasons.

In a letter to Mr. Reagan, Mr. McMahon said only that he had "reached a stage where I should move on."

Officials said that Mr. McMahon, 56 years old, has been talking about retiring from the agency for more than a year. He has held the post of Deputy Director of Central Intelligence since June 1982.

Members of the House and Senate Committees that oversee the C.I.A. have said they could trust Mr. McMahon, an experienced intelligence officer who had spent his entire professional career with the agency.

Since 1982, Mr. Gates has headed the agency's intelligence directorate, the part of the C.I.A. that analyzes all of the information gathered by American intelligence agencies. His nomination is subject to Senate confirmation.

After joining the agency in 1966 as an intelligence analyst, Mr. Gates worked on strategic arms issues. In 1974, he was named to the staff of the National Security Council, where he served before returning to the C.I.A. in 1980 as an aide to Adm. Stansfield Turner, President Carter's Director of Central Intelligence. He later became the national intelligence officer for the Soviet Union.